

ED295394 1988-00-00 Preschool Services for Children with Handicaps. ERIC Digest #450.

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TEXT: On October 8, 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed P.L. 99-457, the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986. This new law brought about significant changes for handicapped infants, toddlers, and preschoolers from birth to age 5, and provided early intervention services and preschool programs for these children.

EARLY INTERVENTION

WHAT CHILDREN ARE ELIGIBLE FOR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES?

Children from birth through 2 years of age who are developmentally delayed (criteria to be determined by each state), or have conditions that typically result in delay, or are--at state discretion--at risk of substantial developmental delay, are eligible for services.

ARE THESE SERVICES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE?

The services vary from state to state. Most states are in the process of phasing in an early intervention program. If all states continue to participate in the program mandated by P.L. 99-457, the following components and services must be provided by each state:

1987-1988: The Governor must designate a lead agency. There is state discretion with respect to which agency is designated for overall administration of the program. The Governor must also establish an interagency coordinating council composed of relevant agencies, consumers, and providers. This Council is to assist in the development and implementation of state applications, as well as interagency agreements and the identification of resources, and to otherwise advise the state. In some states, the Council also serves as the lead agency.

1988-1990: The state must adopt a public policy which includes all of the components of a statewide system for providing early intervention services to eligible infants and toddlers.

1990-1991: The state must demonstrate that it has in effect a statewide system for providing early intervention services. For all eligible children, the state must conduct multidisciplinary assessments, develop individualized family service plans, and make available case management services.

1991 and all succeeding years: The state must make available to all eligible handicapped infants and toddlers within the state appropriate early intervention services.

WHAT SERVICES MUST BE PROVIDED?

If a state chooses to participate in this program, early intervention services for each eligible child must include:

--a multidisciplinary assessment; --a written Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) developed by a multidisciplinary team and the child's parents; --services designed to meet developmental needs, which may include special education, speech and language pathology and audiology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services, parent and family training and counseling services, transition services, medical services for diagnostic purposes, and health services necessary to enable the child to benefit from other early intervention services; --case management services for every eligible child and his or her parents; --qualified personnel to provide all services; --a system for the establishment and maintenance of standards, certification, and licensing

policies; and --services provided at no cost to parents except when federal or state law provides for a system of payments by parents, including provision for a schedule of sliding fees.

WHAT MUST THE INDIVIDUAL FAMILY SERVICE PLAN (IFSP) INCLUDE?

Each plan must address the needs of BOTH the child and the family. The IFSP must contain:

--a statement of the child's present levels of development (cognitive, speech and language, psychosocial, motor, and self help); --a statement of the family's strengths and needs relating to the enhancement of the child's development; --a statement of major outcomes to be achieved for the child and family; --the criteria, procedures, and timelines for determining progress; --the specific early intervention services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child and family, including the method, frequency, and intensity of service; --the projected dates for the initiation and expected duration of services; --the name of the case manager; and --procedures for transition from early intervention into the preschool program.

The IFSP must be evaluated at least once a year, and must be reviewed every 6 months, or more often when appropriate.

HOW CAN A CHILD BE REFERRED FOR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES?

For infants and toddlers from birth through age 2, the referral process will vary in each state. Until each state establishes a referral system, the lead agency in each state will be an appropriate starting point. (This digest concludes with a listing of the lead agency for each state and the District of Columbia.)

PRESCHOOL

WHEN MUST STATES PROVIDE SERVICES TO CHILDREN AGED 3 THROUGH 5?

By school year 1990-1991, all states applying for P.L. 94-142 funds will have to demonstrate that they are providing a free appropriate public education to all handicapped children aged 3 through 5.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES MUST BE PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AGED 3 THROUGH 5?

The services will be administered through the state education agency (SEA) and local education agencies (LEA). However, SEAs and LEAs may contract with other programs, agencies, and providers in order to provide a range of service models. The committee report affirms variations in length of school day and range and variety of preschool programs. Examples include part-day home-based, and part or full-day

center-based programs. The report also states that family services play an important role in preschool programs and that whenever appropriate, and to the extent desired by the parents, the preschooler's Individualized Education Program (IEP) will include instruction for parents.

HOW CAN A CHILD BE REFERRED FOR PRESCHOOL SERVICES?

All states will offer preschool services through the Special Education Division of the local school systems.

STATE LEAD AGENCIES

Alabama--Department of Education, (205) 261-5099 Alaska--Department of Health and Social Services, (907) 465-3037 Arizona--Department of Economic Security, (602) 255-5775 Arkansas--Department of Human Services, (501) 371-3419 California--Department of Developmental Services, (916) 323-4828 Colorado--Department of Education, (303) 866-6710 Connecticut--Department of Education, (203) 566-6584 Delaware--Department of Public Instruction, (302) 736-5471 Washington, D.C.--Department of Human Services, (202) 727-5930 Florida--Department of Education, (904) 488-6830 Georgia--Department of Human Resources, (404) 894-6329 Hawaii--Department of Health, (808) 732-3197 Idaho--Department of Health and Welfare, (208) 334-5531 Illinois--Board of Education, (217) 782-6601 Indiana--Department of Mental Health, (317) 232-7879 Iowa--Department of Education, (515) 281-5614 Kansas--Department of Health and Environment, (913) 296-1316 Kentucky--Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, (502) 564-7703 Louisiana--Department of Education, (504) 342-3675 Maine--Department of Educational and Cultural Services, (207) 289-5950 Maryland--Governor's Office for Children and Youth, (301) 225-1290 Massachusetts--Department of Public Health, (617) 727-5090 Michigan--Department of Education, (517) 373-8483 Minnesota--Minnesota Department of Education, (612) 296-7032 Mississippi--Board of Health, (601) 960-7613 Missouri--Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, (314) 751-2965 Montana--Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, (406) 444-2995 Nebraska--Department of Education, (402) 471-2471 Nevada--Department of Human Resources, (702) 885-4730 New Hampshire--Department of Education, (603) 271-3493 New Jersey--Department of Education, (609) 292-0147 New Mexico--Health and Environment Department, (505) 827-0118 New York--Department of Health, (518) 474-3664 North Carolina--Department of Human Resources, (919) 733-3654 North Dakota--Department of Human Services, (701) 224-2768 Ohio--Department of Health, (614) 466-3263 Oklahoma--Department of Education, (405) 751-0065 Oregon--Department of Human Resources, (503) 378-2429 Pennsylvania--Office of Mental Retardation, (717) 783-5758 Rhode Island--Department of Special Education, (401) 456-8699 South Carolina--Department of Health and Environmental Control, (803) 734-4610 South Dakota--Department of Education and Cultural Affairs, (605) 773-5239

Tennessee--Department of Education, (615) 741-2851 Texas--Department of Health, (512) 465-2671 Utah--Department of Health, (801) 538-6161 Vermont--Department of Education, (803) 828-3141 Virginia--Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Service, (804) 786-3710 Washington--Department of Social and Health Services, (206) 753-4983 West Virginia--Department of Health, (304) 348-0627 Wisconsin--Division of Health, (608) 266-2670 Wyoming--Department of Health and Social Services, (307) 777-7115

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NOTE: Because of frequent changes in designated lead agencies, the above list may not be entirely up-to-date.

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